

Testimony of Monica Keady before the Energy and Technology Committee in support of

H.B. 5410 AAC GAS COMPANIES' COST RECOVERY OF LOST AND UNACCOUNTED  
FOR GAS H.B. 5409 AAC HYDRAULIC FRACTURING WASTE

Senator Duff, Representative Reed, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of HB 5410, An Act Concerning Gas Companies' Cost Recovery of Lost and Unaccounted for Gas, and HB 5409, An Act Concerning Hydraulic Fracturing Waste. Both bills address problems in the natural gas industry that damage our environment.

HB 5410 creates an incentive for gas companies to repair pipeline leaks that are allowing methane to escape into our atmosphere. Firstly, it's not right that gas companies can charge consumers for escaped gas and, secondly, as gas usage increases, so does the threat to Connecticut's air quality as methane is known to contribute to greenhouse gases.

Currently, natural gas distribution companies are allowed to charge customers for the cost of unlimited "lost and unaccounted for gas," much of which is gas that escapes through small leaks throughout the distribution system. Companies are only required to fix leaks that threaten public safety, and since they can recover the cost of leaked gas, they have no incentive to repair non-hazardous leaks. This is troubling on two fronts:

1. Customers are made to bear the cost of gas they are not using; and
2. Methane has truly dangerous global warming potential—it is 56 times stronger than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period and 21 times stronger over a 100-year period.

HB 5410 would address these problems by limiting gas companies' ability to recover the cost of lost gas, which provides an incentive to fix leaks; over time, this will cut greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the cost of gas. A similar bill has been in effect in New York State since the 1990s; the New York Public service Commission estimates it saves consumers in that state \$48 million a year.

I also support HB 5409 which would classify fracking fluid as hazardous waste, closing a loophole in federal law that's allowed it to remain unregulated. The research I've come across strongly indicates that fracking waste is a highly toxic mixture that threatens groundwater quality. The regulatory approach in HB 5409 and similar bill HB 5308 is a positive step, but not sufficient on its own. It would still allow the fluid to be stored and treated in Connecticut. The complete ban in SB 237, before the Environment Committee, is a more comprehensive solution to protect Connecticut's waters and public health.

Connecticut has been a leader in taking care of our fragile environment. Please continue on this path by supporting both HB 5410 and HB 5409. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
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